

PRESIDENT WILSON'S SPEECHES ON PEACE

TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE

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PREFACE

This volume contains the more important speeches that President Wilson has made since the signing of the armistice. The speeches deal with peace, the problems that peace call up, and how to solve them wisely and permanently. The first two were addresses delivered to the Houses of Congress of the United States, and the others were the utterances of President Wilson in France, England, Italy, at the Peace Conference, and in New York City.

They form a fitting companion volume to his "Speeches on the World War." Because of the favorable reception accorded to the former volume and the great influence that President Wilson's ideas have in molding the destiny of the world at this juncture of its history, we publish the present collection of addresses, which are characterized by the same poise, dignified style, high ideals, and broad humanity that marked his other speeches.

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PRESIDENT WILSON'S SPEECHES ON PEACE

PEACE AND THE QUESTIONS IT EXCITES

President Wilson addressed a joint session of the Houses of Congress on December 2, 1918, as follows:

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

The year that has elapsed since last I appeared before you to fulfill my constitutional duty to give Congress information of the state of the union has been so crowded with great events, great processes, and great results ~~that~~ I cannot hope to give you an adequate picture ~~of these~~ transactions or far-reaching changes which have been brought in the life of the nation and of the world. You have witnessed these things, as I know. It is too soon to assess them, and we who stand in the midst of them and a part of them are less qualified than another generation will be to say what they mean or even what they have been. But there stand out facts which are unmistakable and with which it is our

duty to deal. To state them is to set the stage for legislative and executive action which must grow out of them, and which we have yet to shape and determine.

A year ago we had sent 149,918 men overseas. Since then we have sent 1,990,913, an average of 162,942 each month, the number in fact rising in May last to 249,997, in June to 278,760, and in July to 307,182, continuing to reach similar figures in August and September—August, 289,970; September, 297,438.

No such movement of troops ever took place before across 3,000 miles of sea, followed by adequate equipment* and supplies carried safely through extraordinary dangers and attacks which were alike strange and infinitely difficult to guard against. In all this movement only 768 men were lost by enemy attacks, 680 of whom were upon an English transport sunk near the Orkney Islands.

I need not tell you what lay back of this great movement. Back of it lay a supporting organization of the industries of the country and all its productive activities, more complete, more spirited and more thorough in methods and effective in results than any other great belligerent has ever been able to effect. We profited greatly by

the example and experiences of the nations which already had been engaged for nearly three years in the exigent and exacting business, every resource, every proficiency, every efficiency taxed to the utmost. We were pupils. But we learned quickly and acted with promptness and readiness in coöperation that justify our great pride that we were able to serve the world with unparalleled energy and quick accomplishment.

But it is not the physical scale of executive efficiency and preparation of supply and equipment and dispatch that I wish to dwell upon, but the mettle and quality of the officers and men we sent over and the sailors who kept the sea and the spirit of the nation that stood behind them. No soldiers or sailors ever proved themselves more quickly ready for the test of battle or acquitted themselves with more splendid courage and achievement when put to the test. Those who played some part in directing the great progress by which the war was pushed irresistibly forward to final triumph may never forget all that delights our thoughts with the story of what our men did. There are the officers, who understood the exacting task they had undertaken and performed it with audacity, efficiency, and unhesitating courage, and imperishable distinction, from their chiefs,

Pershing and Sims, down to the youngest lieutenant. And their men were worthy of them, such men as hardly need be commanded and go to their terrible adventure blithely and with quickness and intelligence: those who know just what their strength will accomplish.

I am proud to be a fellow countryman of men of such stuff and valor. Those of us who stayed at home did our duty. The war could not be won or the gallant men who fought it given their opportunity to win it otherwise, but for many a long day we shall think ourselves "Accurst that we were not there and hold our manhood cheap while any speaks that fought" with those at St. Mihiel or Chateau-Thierry.

THE FATEFUL MOMENT

What we all thank God for with deepest gratitude is that our men went in force into the line of battle just at the critical moment when the whole fate of the world seemed to hang in the balance, and threw their fresh strength into the ranks of freedom in time to turn the whole tide and sweep of the fateful struggle, turn it once for all so that thenceforth it was back, back, back for their enemies, always back, never again forward. After that it was only a scant four months before

the Commanders of the Central Empires knew themselves beaten, and now their very Empires are in liquidation. And through it how fine the spirit of the nation was—what unity of purpose, what untiring zeal, what elevation of purpose ran through all its splendid display of strength; what untiring accomplishment.

I have said that those of us who stayed at home to do the work of organization and supply will always wish we had been with the men whom we had sustained by our labor, but we can never be ashamed. It has been an inspired thing to be here in the midst of the fine men who had turned aside from every private interest of their own and devoted the whole of their training and capacity to tasks that supplied the sinew to the whole great undertaking.

NATION'S ONE THOUGHT

The patriotism, unselfishness, thoroughgoing devotion and distinguished capacity that marked their toilsome labors day after day, month after month, have made them fit mates and comrades of the men in the trenches and on the sea. And not men here in Washington only. They have but directed vast achievements. Throughout innumerable factories, upon innumerable farms, in

the depths of coal, iron, and copper mines, wherever the stuffs of industry were to be obtained and prepared, in the shipyards, on the railways, at the docks, on sea, in every labor that was needed, to sustain the battle lines, men have vied with each other to do their part and do it well. They can look any man-at-arms in the face and say, We also strove to win and gave the best that was in us to make our fleets and armies sure of their triumph.

And what shall we say of our women—of their instant intelligence and quickening in every task they touch, their capacity for organization and coöperation which gave their action discipline and enhanced the effectiveness of everything they attempted, their aptitude at tasks to which they had never before set their hand, their utter self-sacrifice alike in what they did and in what they gave? Their contribution has been great and the result beyond appraisal. They have added new luster to the annals of American womanhood. The least tribute we can pay them is to make them the equals of men in political rights as they have proved themselves their equals in every field of practical work they have entered, whether for themselves or for their country. These great days of completed achievement would be sadly marred were we to omit that act of justice. Besides the

immense practical services they have rendered, the women of the country have been the moving spirits in the systematic economics by which our people voluntarily assisted to supply the suffering peoples of the world and the armies upon every front with food and everything else that we have that might serve the common cause. The details of such a story can never be fully written but we carry them at our hearts and thank God we can say we are kinsmen of such.

THE GREAT TRIUMPH

And now we are sure of the great triumph for which every sacrifice was made. It has come, come in its completeness and, with the pride and inspiration of these days of achievement quick within us, we turn to the tasks of peace again—a peace secure against the violence of irresponsible monarchs and ambitious military coteries and made ready for a new order, for the new foundation of justice and fair dealing. We are about to give order and organization to this peace, not only for ourselves but for the other peoples of the world as well, as far as they will suffer us to serve them. It is international justice we seek, not domestic safety merely. Our thoughts have dwelt of late upon Europe, upon Asia, upon the Near

and Far East, and very little upon the acts of peace and accommodation that wait to be performed at our own doors.

While we are adjusting our relations with the rest of the world is it not of capital importance that we should clear away all ground for misunderstanding with our immediate neighbors and give proof of the friendship we really feel? I hope the members of the Senate will permit me to speak once more of the unratified treaty of friendship and adjustment with the Republic of Colombia. I very earnestly urge upon them early favorable action upon that vital matter. I believe they all feel with me that the stage of affairs is now set for such action as will be not only just, but generous, and in the spirit of the new age upon which we have so happily entered.

READJUSTMENT PROBLEMS

So far as our domestic affairs are concerned, the problem of our return to peace is a problem of economic and industrial readjustment. That problem is less serious for us than it may turn out to be for nations which have suffered disarrangements and losses of war longer than we. Our people, moreover, do not wait to be coached or led. They know their own business, are quick

and resourceful at every readjustment, definite in purpose and self-reliant in action. Any leading strings we might seek to put them in would speedily become hopelessly tangled, because they would pay no attention to them and go their own way. All that we can do as their legislative and executive servants is to mediate in the process of change here, there, and elsewhere as we may. I have heard much counsel as to plans that should be formed and personally conducted to a happy consummation, but from no quarter have I seen any general scheme of reconstruction emerge, which I thought it likely we could force our spirited business men and self-reliant laborers to accept with due pliancy and obedience.

While the war lasted we set up many agencies by which to direct the industries of the country in services it was necessary for them to render by which to make sure of abundant supply of materials needed, by which to check undertakings that could for the first time be dispensed with, and to stimulate those that were most serviceable in war, by which to gain for the purchasing departments of the Government a certain control over prices of essential articles and materials, by which to restrain trade with alien enemies, to make the most of available shipping

and to systematize financial transactions, both public and private, so that there would be no unnecessary conflict or confusion, by which, in short, to put every material energy of the country in harness to draw, load, and make of us one team in the accomplishment of a great task.

THE HARNESS OFF

But the moment we knew the armistice to have been signed we took the harness off. Raw materials upon which the Government had kept its hands for fear they should not be enough for industries that supplied the armies have been released and put into the general market again. Great industrial plants whose whole output and machinery had been taken over for uses of the Government have been set free to return to uses to which they were put before the war. It has not been possible to remove so readily or so quickly control of foodstuffs and shipping, because the world has still to be fed from our granaries and the ships are still needed to send supplies to our men oversea and to bring the men back as fast as the disturbed conditions on the other side of the water permit; but even these restraints are being relaxed as much as possible, and more and more as the weeks go by.

Never before have there been agencies in existence in this country which knew so much of the field of supply of labor and of industry as the War Industries Board, the War Trade Board, the Labor Department and the Food Administration and the Fuel Administration have known since their labor became thoroughly systematized; and they have not been isolated agencies; they have been directed by men who represented the permanent departments of the Government and so have been the centers of unified and coöperative action. It has been the policy of the executive, therefore, since the armistice was assured (which is in effect a complete submission of the enemy) to put the knowledge of these bodies at the disposition of the business men of the country and to offer their intelligent mediation at every point and in every matter where it was desired.

WORK FOR SOLDIERS

It is surprising how fast the process of a return to a peace footing has moved in the three weeks since the fighting stopped. It promises to outrun any inquiry that may be instituted and any aid that may be offered. It will not be easy to direct it any better than it will direct itself. The American business man is of a quick initiative,

The ordinary and normal processes of private initiative will not, however, provide immediate employment for all of the men of our returning armies. Those who are of trained capacity, those who are skilled workmen, those who have acquired familiarity with established business, those who are ready and willing to go to their farms, all those whose attitudes are known or will be sought out by employers will find no difficulty, it is safe to say, in finding place and employment. But there will be others who will be at a loss where to gain a livelihood unless pains are taken to guide them and put them in the way of work. There will be a large flowing residuum of labor which should not be left wholly to shift for itself.

It seems to me important, therefore, that the development of public works of every sort should be promptly resumed in order that opportunities should be created for unskilled labor in particular and that plans should be made for such developments of our unused lands and our natural resources as we have hitherto lacked stimulation to undertake.

ROUGH PLACES SMOOTH

I particularly direct your attention to the very practical plans which the Secretary of the

Interior has developed in his annual report and before your committees for the reclamation of the arid swamp and cut-over lands which might, if the States were willing and able to coöperate, redeem some three hundred million acres of land for cultivation. There are said to be fifteen or twenty million acres of land in the west at present arid, for whose reclamation water is available if properly conserved. There are about two hundred thirty million acres from which the forests have been cut but which have never yet been cleared for the plow and which lie waste and desolate. These lie scattered all over the Union. And there are nearly eight million acres of land that lie under swamps or subject to periodical overflow or too wet for anything but grazing, which it is perfectly feasible to drain and protect and redeem. Congress can at once direct thousands of the returning soldiers to the reclamation of the arid lands which it has already undertaken if it will but enlarge the plans and appropriations which it has entrusted to the Department of Interior. It is possible in dealing with our unused land to effect a great rural and agricultural development which will afford the best sort of opportunity to men who want to help themselves; and the Secretary of the Interior has thought the possible

methods out in a way which is worthy of your most friendly attention.

I have spoken of the control which must yet for a while, perhaps for a long while, be exercised over shipping because of the priority of service to which our forces overseas are entitled and which should also be accorded the shipments which are to save the recently liberated peoples from starvation and many devastated regions from permanent ruin.

BELGIUM AND FRANCE

May I not say a special word about the needs of Belgium and Northern France? No sums of money paid by way of indemnity will serve of themselves to save them from hopeless disadvantage for years to come. Something more must be done than merely to find the money. If they had money and raw material in abundance to-morrow they could not resume their place in the industry of the world to-morrow—the very important place they held before the flame of war swept across them. Many of their factories are razed to the ground. Much of their machinery is destroyed or has been taken away. Their people are scattered and many of their best workmen are dead. Their markets will